

Please help improve the lives of rural Americans by protecting and expanding the Universal Service Fund (USF) for wireless providers. Wireless telecommunications is no longer a luxury in our society; it is a fundamental necessity for public health, safety and economic development.

What happens when a car accident happens in an area with no cell coverage? Or a farmer has an accident in his barn? Precious time is lost in contacting emergency services, which can mean the difference between life and death. Plus, carriers like U.S. Cellular get nothing but bad publicity when something like this does happen and unfortunately a critical 911 call cannot go through.

Capping the fund will shut the door on rural America. Less USF support for rural wireless networks will leave us with poor coverage, dropped calls and dangerous dead zones. The urban/rural technology gap will only widen.

Rural America deserves the same cell phone service as our big cities. I urge you to expand – not cap – the USF. Please don't leave rural America behind.

Thank you.

Ed Papineau